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#3 Curran, Andrew Judge (1865-1949) Papers, 1878-1923
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INTRODUCTION

Papers and collected materials of Andrew J. Curran, a lawyer from Crawford County, Kansas, who served as judge for the 38th District Court of Kansas during the period of 1911 to 1922. The collection consists of personal and professional correspondence; court documents; information on the topics of elections, naturalization, and Americanization; pamphlets and printed materials; a scrapbook pertaining to the subject of bimetallism; speech notes; and other materials.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Porter Library Bulletin of 15 February 1969, records the deposit of the bulk of this collection but does not identify the donor. The scrapbook was donated to the Leonard H. Axe Library by Frank and Patricia Kuhel.

BIOLOGICAL SKETCH

Andrew Judge Curran was born in South Haven, Michigan, on September 9, 1865. The Curran family moved to Crawford County, Kansas, in 1871. Andrew J. Curran graduated from the State Normal School in Emporia, Kansas, in 1888. In 1895 he received a law degree from the University of Michigan. Curran entered into a law practice in Pittsburg, Kansas, and became interested in politics and public affairs. He was elected deputy county attorney for Crawford County and, later, became the city attorney of Pittsburg. In 1910 he was elected the judge for the 38th District Court of Kansas. He was re-elected to the position in 1914 and 1918.

In January 1920 the legislature of Kansas established the Court of Industrial Relations to settle disputes between labor and management. Many of the Court's early actions involved the coal mining industry and the United Mine Workers of America. The Court called for Alexander Howat, president of U.M.W.A. District 14 in Kansas, to appear in response to his calls for a strike. Howat, president of District 14 since 1906, was not a supporter of the Industrial Court and he refused to obey the court's order. The Court appealed to Judge Curran of the 38th District Court of Kansas to compel Howat to appear. When Howat again refused he was arrested and brought before Curran who charged him with contempt of court, refused to grant him a new trial, and sentenced him to prison.

Because of Curran's action in the Howat case, miners and left-wing factions in Crawford County did not support Curran for judge in his re-election campaign of 1922. Curran lost the election, resumed his law practice in Pittsburg, and campaigned vigorously against foreign immigrant elements in southeast Kansas he believed to be anarchists and Bolsheviks.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Andrew J. Curran Collections consists of correspondence, court documents, pamphlets and printed materials, a scrapbook, speech notes, an obituary, and miscellaneous materials. The bulk of the collection pertains to Curran's career as an attorney in Crawford County, Kansas, and judge for the 38th District Court of Kansas. Most of the materials pertain to the subjects of Americanization, naturalization, and the Kansas Industrial Court Law. The collection is arranged into the following series: **Obituary; Correspondence; Court Cases and Rulings; Pamphlets and Printed Material; Scrapbook; Speech Notes; and Miscellaneous.**

The **Obituary** series contains copies of the obituaries for Andrew J. Curran that appeared in the Pittsburg Daily Headlight and the Pittsburg Sun newspapers.

The **Correspondence** series is divided into five sub-series: **Alexander Howat Case; Elections, Naturalization, Court Cases,** and **Personal** correspondence. Each of the sub-series is arranged chronologically.

The **Alexander Howat Case** sub-series primarily contains letters from friends and supporters commenting who comment on Curran's verdict in the Howat legal case. Most of the letters are dated from March through May 1920. There are also several letters written to and from Curran in 1922-23 regarding Curran's decision in support of the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations. Also included in many of the letters are clippings from various newspapers in support of the "rule of law". Most of the letters are replete with people's ideas about Americanization, Communism, Socialism, Radicalism, and Anarchism.

The **Elections** sub-series contains letters congratulating Curran on his election victories in 1910, 1914, and 1918. It also includes letters and clippings expressing regrets for his election loss in 1922.

The **Naturalization** sub-series consists of letters and enclosures from the United States Department of Labor regarding policies and court cases on naturalization of immigrants dating from 1911 to 1922. Also in the sub-series are letters to and from the American Legion and the V.F.W. regarding naturalization laws, the rules of entry during World War I, and the status of married women. Notable among this correspondence is a letter dated May 10, 1922, referring to the "Amazon Army", a name attached to the wives and daughters of striking coal miners who protested against the "scab" miners employed in place of their husbands and fathers in southeast Kansas mines; lists of southeast Kansas residents who applied for naturalization in November 1921; and handwritten lists of southeast Kansas immigrant identified as "radicals" in 1921 and 1922.

The **Court Cases** sub-series consists of letters to Judge Curran regarding cases heard in his court from 1911 to 1922. The letters pertain to child support and custody, parole, debts, rulings, and fee payment.

The **Personal** sub-series contains letters dating from 1895 to 1923. Included is correspondence with classmates from the University of Michigan law school.

The **Court Cases** series is arranged chronologically, except for the last folder of undated material. The series contains briefs, petitions, and decrees and bar dockets. Most of the materials in this series relate to naturalization and citizenship cases not tried by Curran, but sent to him by the U.S. Department of Labor for reference. Similar documents are also enclosed with the correspondence in the **Naturalization** sub-series. There are also copies of court documents relating to prohibition, a road tax case, and a divorce case.

The **Pamphlets and Printed Materials** series contains a variety of pamphlets, off-prints, printed speeches, and other publications on topics including American citizenship, American Constitutional government, a code of professional ethics for lawyers, the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations, naturalization law, a student textbook for immigrants seeking to become naturalized citizens, pardons and paroles, military deferment in World War I, Christian missions, and miscellaneous topics.

The **Scrapbook** series consists of one volume of pamphlets and newspaper clippings. Most of the material pertains to labor unions and political parties. There are also several reprints of speeches made by William Jennings Bryan during the election of 1896, and a few of Curran's financial and real estate records from 1896. The volume contains an index in its front.

The **Speech Notes** series consists of extensive handwritten notes and manuscript pages for speeches on the topics of Americanization and the Ku Klux Klan.

The **Miscellaneous** series is arranged chronologically, except for the last folder of undated material. The series contains pamphlets on a variety of subjects, presentations made by Curran, poems, and miscellaneous material. Of note in the series is a U.S. Department of Labor Student's Handbook on naturalization, a 1920 Court of Industrial Relations booklet with a message from Governor Henry J. Allen, William P. Dillard's 1920 election pamphlet "How Shall We Vote?" and World War I draft registration forms.

FOLDER LIST

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